

Appln No. 09/575,165
Amdt. Dated February 9, 2004
Response to Office action of November 17, 2003

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COPY**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the detailed Office Action dated 17 November 2003.

Claim Objections

1. In Item 1 of the Office Action the Examiner objects to former claims 4-6, 13 and 23 as being multiple dependent claims that append to other multiple dependent claims. In response, the Applicant has amended the respective claims to remove all instances of two-tiered multiple dependency. In particular, former claims 4, 6, 13 and 23 have been amended and now appended to independent or single-dependant claims. (For correspondence between old and new claim numbering please see the last paragraph of this response)

Claim Rejections

2. In Item 3 of the Office Action the Examiner rejects former claims 1-4, 7-11, 14-20, 23 and 24 as being anticipated by Izawa et al. (US 5 420 406). In response, the Applicant files a statement of proposed amendments and makes the following submission.

The applicant admits that there are some similarities between the disclosure in Izawa et al. and the invention defined in the in the abovementioned claims. However, there are also some substantial differences between the two disclosures.

One such a difference includes the fact that the coded data, printed on the secure document disclosed in the subject application, is indicative of not only the identity of the document but also of a plurality of reference points on/of the document. This allows information of the position of the sensing device relative to these points to be obtained by the sensing devise and transmitted to the computer system. Whilst this feature has not been claimed, it has been disclosed in the specification. Specifically note page 13 lines 23-25; page 14 lines 15 and 27; page 18 line 31 to page 19 line 4 and page 27 lines 21-22 and lines 28-30.

In response to the Examiner's objection, all independent claims have been amended in order to include this feature of the invention. In particular, the fact that the coded data is indicative of a plurality of reference points on/of the document has been included in former claims 1, 9 and 15.

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The Applicant draws to the attention of the Examiner the fact that such feature has neither been disclosed, nor suggested, by Izawa et al. In view of this, the Applicant respectfully submits that the invention, defined in the new claims of the subject application, is substantially distinguishable from that disclosed by Izawa et al.

3. In item 5 of the Office Action the Examiner rejects former claims 5, 6, 12, 13, 21 and 22 as being unpatentable over Izawa et al. or Wang et al. (US 5710419), in view of Izawa et al.

In view of the above discussion, the Applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, refer to an invention that would not be obvious to a person skilled in the art in view of Wang et al. or Izawa et al., when considered either separately or in combination.

Other Voluntary Amendments

4. The Applicant has also introduced some amendments which are not responsive to the Examiner's objections.

In particular, independent claim 35 and dependent claims 33, 34, 36, 48 and 50, have been included in the specification. Claim 35 defers from former claim 1 only in its structure. The new dependent claims introduce some additional features of the invention, such as cancellation by the issuer (claim 33), identity of the sensing device (claim 34), querying of the verification result (claim 36), simultaneous printing of coded data and user discernable information (claim 48) and simultaneous printing on both sides of the document (claim 50). The Applicant wishes to point out that all these features have been previously disclosed in the detailed description of the specification.

To facilitate a consecutive numbering and improve readability, the Applicant has cancelled all former claims and introduced a new set of claims. For more convenient review of the amended claims, the Applicant includes a table of correspondence between the old and the new numbering of the claims. As was already mentioned, the main difference between the old and the new set is in the introduction of new claims (33-36, 48 and 50) in the new set. For Examiner's convenience, all new claims have been presented in bold and all independent claims have been underlined.

| Old claim no. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------|----|
| New claim no. | <u>25</u> | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | <u>35</u> | 36 |

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|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | | 20 | | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| <u>37</u> | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | <u>43</u> | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 |

In addition, to clarify the fact that the expression "printed data" in former claim 15 relates to information that has to be readable and understandable by the user, as well as to distinguish this data from the coded data that is also "printed data", this expression has been substituted with "user discernable information".

Finally, some additional multiple claim dependencies, compatible with 37 CFR 1.75(c), have been introduced in former claims 7, 10, 12, 14 and 22.

In view of the proposed amendments and the above submission, the Applicant appeals to the Examiner for a favourable reconsideration of the application.

Very respectfully,

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